

Council on Mentally Ill Offenders Meeting Minutes

April 6, 2017 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM

LOCATION: Board of Parole Hearings Executive Board Room
1515 K Street, 5th Floor, Suite 550, Sacramento, CA 95814

I. Welcome, Roll Call

Executive Officer Welch conducted a roll call. The following members were present:

Brenda Grealish, Chief, Mental Health Services Division, California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) (representing DHCS Director, Jennifer Kent)
David Meyer, Clinical Professor/Research Scholar, USC Keck School of Medicine
Lester P. Pincu, Professor Emeritus of Criminology, CSU Fresno
Mack Jenkins, Retired Chief Probation Officer, San Diego County
Manuel Jimenez, Vice Chair, Former Behavioral Health Director, Alameda County

Mark Grabau, Chief Psychologist, California Department of State Hospitals (DSH) (representing DSH Director, Pamela Ahlin)
Matthew Garcia, Field Training Officer, Sacramento Police Department
Scott Kernan, Chair, Secretary, California Department of Corrections
Stephen Manley, Santa Clara County Superior Court Judge

CDCR Staff Present:

- Diana Toche, DDS, Undersecretary Health Care Services, CDCR
- Stephanie Welch, MSW, Executive Officer, COMIO
- Michelle Grant, Program Analyst
- Norine Occhipinti, Associate Governmental Program Analyst

II. Key Policy Issues and Updates

Chair Kernan briefed the council members on the current status of implementation of Proposition 57 which changes the system by which inmates earn credits toward parole eligibility based on behavior and participation in programming. The new system includes milestone credits for participation in educational programming that apply to all inmates except for those who are condemned or have been sentenced to life without parole. He noted that there are special milestone programs that are part of Prop 57 for those who have behavioral health needs. Emergency regulations will be in effect May 2, 2017. He also stated there are seven facilities that are secured but not locked that have been sited for reentry which house individuals with mental illnesses.

Executive Officer Stephanie Welch provided an update on the council's support of the Stepping Up Initiative which aims to reduce the number of people with mental illness booked into jail. COMIO will be focused on four outcomes in 2017 that are related to the Initiative:

1. Strategies to reduce the number of people with mental illness booked into jail
2. Reducing the length of time people with mental illness remain in jail
3. Increasing connections to treatment
4. Reduce Recidivism

III. Transitions Clinic Network Model – “Transitions Clinic Network: Working to Improve the Health Care System in Partnership with Justice-Involved Individuals”

Dr. Shira Shavit provided a PowerPoint presentation which gave an overview the Transitions Clinic Network Model. She explained the background and purpose of the program as well as successes and challenges of its implementation. The transitions clinic model is a primary care model that is specific to patients with a history of incarceration. Dr. Shavit noted challenges with patients not having health insurance upon release, not having a discharge plan, having a short supply of their medications, and facing other barriers with obtaining food and housing. The transitions clinic model includes individuals and communities impacted by the criminal justice system in the design, implementation, and evaluation of programs. It utilizes Certified Community Health Workers who are formerly justice-involved to help patients in navigating the health system and managing their own health. Measured outcomes include emergency department utilization, hospitalization, primary care utilization, and incarceration. Use of the Transitions Clinic Model has shown reductions in emergency department utilization.

IV. Action Item: Adopt Meeting Minutes

Motion to adopt council meeting minutes from February 2, 2017.

Steven Manley so moved. Seconded. None opposed. Dr. Toche abstained. Motion Approved.

V. Preventing Crisis – “Beyond CIT: The Next Level of Crisis Response and Prevention”

Lieutenant Brian Bixler gave a presentation on the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) – Mental Evaluation Unit (MEU) which is part of the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health/Emergency Outreach Bureau-Law Enforcement Program. He explained the unit’s Mental Health Intervention Training which trains officers on how to identify persons who are suffering from mental illness or are in a mental health crisis and properly manage and de-escalate the situation. The program focuses on five pillars: training, triage, crisis response and follow up, and community engagement. Lieutenant Bixler provided an overview of the different aspects of the program that address the five pillars.

VI. Key Policy Priorities for 2017

Cory Salzillo, Legislative Director of California State Sheriff’s Association (CSSA) updated the council on organization’s key policy priorities for 2017. He noted that Santa Barbara County Sheriff Bill Brown is the incoming president of CSSA and is also a mental health advocate. CSSA proposed a funding package for the new budget in attempt to facilitate community mental health facilities but it was not included in the Governor’s proposed budget. Mr. Salzillo also mentioned that CSSA is a participant in the Stepping Up Initiative and is in support of bills SB 222, AB 720, and AB 1136.

VII. Maximizing Medi-Cal to Serve the Justice-Involved

Daniel Mistak, General Counsel of Community Oriented Correctional Health Services (COCHS), provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding best practices in maximizing Medi-Cal to provide appropriate services for justice-involved individuals. He stated that connecting health care in the criminal justice system to health care in the greater community preserves the investments jurisdictions make in their vulnerable justice-involved populations. He explained that the Affordable Care Act expanded health coverage and made the justice-

involved eligible for the first time, increases treatment resources that could have a major impact on the criminal justice system. Mr. Mistak noted that many of the services utilized by Collaborative Courts could be financed through Medi-Cal expansion which provides effective access to individuals with high needs and sustainable funding to specialty courts. He gave an overview of the financial benefits of offering effective behavioral health treatment to justice-involved individuals and models for how to enroll them in health coverage.

VIII. Peers as Partners in Recovery, Wellness and Reentry

Cesar Lagleva, LCSW, Ethnic Services and Training Manager for Marin County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services (BHRS), presented on Marin County's Workforce Education and Training (WET) Program. The goal of the program is to develop a workforce that is culturally competent, linguistically and culturally reflective of the communities served, and able to offer integrated treatment for co-occurring disorders. Mr. Lagleva explained the details of the WET Scholarship Vocational Training Program which offers scholarship funds to Marin County residents with lived experience in the behavioral health care system and the criminal justice or child welfare system, to be trained as mental health peer specialists, certified drug and alcohol counselors, and certified domestic violence counselors. He expressed that certification of peers specialist serves many purposes including, but not limited to, the following:

- Establishes a standard of practice
- Legitimizes the role by establishing standards of practice and a code of ethics
- Provides peer specialist employees with a professional voice
- Qualifies services for federal financial participation of at least 50%
- Allows for portability from one county to another.

He also provided the following recommendations:

- Promote and foster the use of peer specialists and drug and alcohol and domestic violence counselors with lived experience as equal professional partners within multi-disciplinary team settings.
- Consider the use of Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) implemented and facilitated by certified peer specialists.
- Promote the use of peer specialists to conduct community and organizational outreach and engagement for the purpose of reducing stigma and discrimination.

Mr. Lagleva's colleague, Connie Learson, a Peer Specialist in Marin County, provided testimony about her lived experience in the behavioral health, child welfare, and criminal justice systems. She expressed the value that being a peer specialist has had for her.

IX. Executive Officer Update

Executive Officer Stephanie Welch provided an update on key policy issues, the April COMIO workshop, and the upcoming COMIO site visit for the summer of 2017. She gave an overview of the current status and potential effects of federal health care reform. Ms. Welch also briefed the council on the discussion from the April 5th workshop regarding the importance of the use peers with lived experience to promote recovery and prevent crisis. She stated that COMIO's educational site visit will take place on July 19th and 20th and will likely be in the California Bay Area.

X. Public Comment on Matters Not on the Agenda

Joe Partansky – Mr. Partansky inquired on whether there is a point person within the Department of Corrections who deals with inmates who are elderly and/or disabled and have special needs. Chair Kernan explained that since these needs are present in so many areas of the department, there is no one specific person who handles it but that Dr. Toche, who is over medical and mental health does have staff who are focusing on it and is open to suggestions. Mr. Partansky suggested that this sort of discussion should happen in regard to both custody and reentry.

Kathleen Casela – Ms. Casela works with the California Youth Empowerment Network (CAYEN) and presented a list of ways that the use of peer support specialists in our workforce can also benefit the specialists themselves. She stated that she supports having a peer seat on the council.

XI. Adjourn